

Thunderbird Lodge

Whittell Estate National Register District

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Thunderbird Lodge, Est. 1936
Lake Tahoe

Courtesy Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society

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Thunderbird Lodge, George Whittell, Jr.'s summer estate, dates from the period in which prominent San Franciscan society built homes at Lake Tahoe. In 1936, Whittell commissioned former Nevada State Architect Frederick DeLongchamps, Nevada's most prominent architect of the era, to design his Tudor Revival-style home and its five surrounding cottages that served as the Card House, Caretaker's Cottage, Cook/Butler Cottage, Admiral's House, and Ranger's Office-Gatehouse. Additionally, the property has an elephant barn and a steel boathouse with an adjoining 600-foot tunnel.

DeLongchamps intended for the architecture to be in harmony with the magnificent setting: a particularly scenic point within the sprawling 27 miles of lakeshore that Whittell owned. The design and materials of the buildings, landscape features, walls, paths, and driveway are a result of this design philosophy. Expert artisans crafted the ironwork and woodwork, while students of the Stewart Indian School in Carson City, under the guidance of their highly-skilled instructors, completed the exquisite stone masonry.

In the early 1980s, the estate's second owner, Jack Dreyfus, constructed an addition onto the main Lodge. Following the regulatory guidelines of the time, Dreyfus chose a modern style rather than matching the original stone construction.

Today, the Whittell Estate is managed and protected by the non-profit Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society and is open for public tours June - October.

For more information on the Thunderbird Lodge visit:

<http://thunderbirdtahoe.org/>

